

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07
L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-02 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15
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FM AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5341
INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN
AMEMBASSY CAIRO
AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS
AMCONSUL JERUSALEM

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E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PFOR, IS, PLO
SUBJECT: ISRAELI REACTION TO THE PNC

1. REACTION IN ISRAEL TO THE RESULTS OF THE PNC HAVE BEEN
MORE OF LESS UNIFORM. FOLLOWING ARE SAMPLE COMMENTS:

2. MAARIV: "THE PALESTINE NATIONAL COUNCIL DREW TO A
CLOSE WITH THE OVERWHELMING VICTORY OF THE 'MODERATE
ELEMENTS.' THOSE MODERATES WHO STATE THAT THE STATE OF
ISRAEL MUST BE WIPED OUT, BUT THAT THIS INTENTION HAD
BETTER NOT BE MENTIONED TOO OFTEN. THOSE MODERATES WHO
FEEL THAT THIS PROCESS OF ANNIHILATION OUT TO BE CARRIED
OUT IN STAGES, SINCE THERE CAN NO LONGER BE ANY THOUGHT
OF LIQUIDATING ISRAEL AT ONE BLOW. THOSE MODERATES
WHO BELIEVE THAT ISRAEL'S DESTRUCTION NEED NOT
NECESSARILY BE ACHIEVED BY MILITARY MEANS ALONE, AND
THAT IT IS DEFINITELY POSSIBLE TO COMBINE MILITARY AND
POLITICAL MEASURES. THOSE MODERATES WHO OPT FOR
FANATICAL ADHERENCE TO PLO STRATEGY AS FORMULATED
IN THE PALESTINE COVENANT, RECOMMENDING HOWEVER SOME
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FLEXIBILITY IN TACTICS SO THAT THE PLO WOULD, OUTWARDLY,
BE CONSIDERED AS PREPARED TO COMPROMISE. ALL THIS IS
BEGINNING TO SOUND ROUTINE, LIKE ALL TRUTHS WHEN TOO
OFTEN REPEATED; THAT DOES NOT MAKE THEM ANY LESS TRUE."

3. HAARETZ: "THE RESOLUTION REJECTS ANY RECOGNITION
OF ISRAEL'S RIGHT TO EXIST, AND CALLS FOR THE

ESTABLISHING OF AN INDEPENDENT PALESTINIAN STATE. THE REJECTION FRONT, WHILE DETERRED FOR THE TIME BEING FROM MAKING TOO DARING A MOVE, WILL NEVERTHELESS CONTINUE TO THREATEN ARAFAT AND THOSE WHO COMPRISED THE MAJORITY VOTE, AND PREVENT THEM FROM MAKING THE CONCESSIONS WHICH WOULD HAVE DONE SO MUCH TO CHANGE THE PLO'S IMAGE....THIS IS NOT MODERATION, BUT OPPOSITION IN PRINCIPLE TO THE HISTORIC BEING OF THE STATE OF ISRAEL, EVEN WITHIN ITS 1967 BORDERS. ISRAEL'S JEWS, WHO DO NOT REGARD THEMSELVES ONLY AS A RELIGIOUS COMMUNITY, HAVE NO REASON TO CHANGE THEIR STAND, WHICH REJECTS THE PLO AS AN ORGANIZATION REPRESENTATIVE OF THE PALESTINIANS, AND THE IDEA OF A STATE LIKELY TO BE CONTROLLED BY IT."

4. DAVAR: "FOLLOWING THE CONFERENCE, (1) ARAFAT IS ENTITLED TO WORK FOR PLO PARTICIPATION AT THE GENEVA TALKS, AND HE COULD VERY WELL ACCEPT AN INVITATION--IF IT IS EXTENDED--WITHOUT HAVING TO CONVENE THE COUNCIL FOR A SPECIAL SESSION; (2) THE PRINCIPLE OF A PALESTINIAN STATE WAS ADOPTED; AS WAS THAT OF (3) PARTICIPATING AT ANY INTERNATIONAL FORUM DISCUSSING THE CONFLICT. AND THIS WAS ENOUGH FOR ARAFAT WHO IN ANY CASE HAD NO INTENTION OF INTRODUCING ANY REAL REFORM IN THE PLO PLATFORM. TO ALL APPEARANCES AN IMPRESSION OF FLEXIBILITY AND TACTICAL THAW HAS BEEN CREATED--WHICH IS PRECISELY WHAT PRESIDENT SADAT ASKED FOR WHEN HE ADDRESSED THE COUNCIL....ISRAEL WOULD, THEREFORE, DO WELL TO WORK OUT A SPEEDY REPLY

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AND RETORT TO THE RESOLUTIONS PUBLISHED IN CAIRO LAST NIGHT AND TO THE ARAB MOVES THAT ARE BOUND TO FOLLOW."

5. JERUSALEM POST: "NOW THE COUNCIL HAS COME AND GONE, AND THE COVENANT HAS NOT HAD ONE IOTA REMOVED FROM OR ADDED TO IT. THERE ARE GOOD REASONS FOR THIS. FIRST, THE OVERWHELMING MAJORITY OF PARTICIPANTS, 'HARDLINERS' AS WELL AS 'SOFTLINERS,' STILL SWEAR BY THE COVENANT: IT EMBODIES THEIR AUTHENTIC STRATEGIC GOALS. SECONDLY, EVEN THOSE WHO MIGHT LEAN TO THE VIEW THAT REVISION WOULD BE SALUTARY, DOUBTLESS AGREED THAT IT WAS NOT WORTH A SPLIT IN THE RANKS. MOREOVER, ATTACHMENT TO THE COVENANT HAS NOT PREVENTED THE PLO FROM WINNING ITS POLITICAL VICTORIES, AND IT NEED NOT BE AN IMPEDIMENT IN THE FUTURE. WHY, ONLY THIS WEEK, EVEN AS THE SPIRIT OF INTRANSIGENCE WAS CLEARLY MANIFESTING ITSELF AT THE COUNCIL, PRESIDENT CARTER CAME OUT WITH A STATEMENT WHICH, WHILE NOT YET MEETING THE WISHES OF THE PLO EVEN HALF WAY, WAS ENCOURAGING ENOUGH FOR

YASSER ARAFAT TO RESPOND WITH THE ASSURANCE THAT HE
'TRUSTS' CARTER. MR. CARTER, FOR HIS PART, CAN
TRUST ARAFAT TO BE TRUE TO HIS COVENANT."

6. THE CABINET COMMUNIQUE MARCH 20 HAD THIS TO SAY
ON THE SUBJECT: "THE FOREIGN MINISTER REVIEWED THE
DISCUSSIONS AT THE CAIRO MEETING OF THE PALESTINIAN
NATIONAL COUNCIL. MR. ALLON DWELT ON THE FACT THAT
IN THEIR SPEECHES IN THE COUNCIL, YASSER ARAFAT AND
FAROUK KADOUMI HAD MADE IT CLEAR, WITHOUT ANY SHADOW
OF DOUBT, THAT THE PLO WAS NOT PREPARED TO ALTER ITS
ULTIMATE GOAL--DEFINED IN THE PALESTINIAN COVENANT--
REGARDING ISRAEL'S ANNIHILATION. ARAFAT AND KADOUMI
HAD EXPRESSED EXPLICITLY IN THE COUNCIL, THAT THE
PLO'S AIM REMAINED UNCHANGED: ESTABLISHMENT OF A
PALESTINIAN STATE THROUGHOUT ALL THE TERRITORY OF THE
LAND OF ISRAEL. ACCORDING TO KADOUMI, THE PLO WOULD
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ACT FOR ISRAEL'S ISOLATION AND FOR ITS REMOVAL FROM
THE UN. THE COUNCIL HAD BEEN OPENED WITH A STATEMENT
BY THE EGYPTIAN PRESIDENT, WHO HAD REITERATED THE ARAB
STATES' COMMITMENT TO THE PALESTINIAN ISSUE, ATTENDED
BY A CALL TO THE PLO TO MODIFY ITS IMAGE--WHILE STRESSING
THE EXTREMIST CONTENT OF THE COUNCIL, WHICH WAS UNITED
IN A STAND OF NON-ACQUIESCENCE IN THE VERY EXISTENCE
OF THE STATE OF ISRAEL."
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